

**The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress**  
Announces the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Writing Contest for Young Readers

*the James & Madeleine McMillan* FAMILY FOUNDATION

# LettersAboutLiterature

Sponsored in association with the Indiana Center for the Book

**Theme:** How did an author's work change your view of the world or yourself?

**Deadlines:** Entry must be postmarked by

- **Level 3** (*high school, grades 9-12*) **December 15, 2014**
- **Level 2** (*middle school, grades 7 & 8*) **January 15, 2015**
- **Level 1** (*upper elementary, grades 4-6*) **January 15, 2015**

## State & National Awards

- Indiana's panel of judges will select the top essayists in the state for each level. State Winners will receive a cash award and 1st place State Winners will advance to the national level.
- A panel of national judges for the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress will select 1 (one) **National Winner** per competition level to receive a **\$1,000 cash award**. The judges will also select 1 (one) **National Honor winner** per competition level to receive a **\$200 cash award**.

## Mail your Indiana entry to:

Letters About Literature Contest  
Indiana Center for the Book  
140 N. Senate Ave  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

*Need some tips to get started? Not sure how to write a personal letter? Visit [read.gov/letters](http://read.gov/letters) to read winning letters from past competitions.*

**P.S.** Remember, a letter is less formal than an essay or research paper. Write honestly and in your own voice as if you were having a conversation with the author. Those are the best letters to read and the most fun to write!

## How to Enter

*In four easy steps!*

### 1. Select!

Select a fiction or nonfiction book, a poem or play you have read and about which you have strong feelings. (*Sorry, no song lyrics!*) It might be a book that helped you through a difficult time or it might be a book that simply touched your heart or inspired you.

### 2. Reflect!

Think before you write. *How* did this author's work change you or your view of the world? *How* do you know it did? *How* and *why* are you different now than you were before you read this work? *Why* did you choose this book and author and not another?

### 3. Persuade!

Write a personal letter to the author, stating how reading his or her work changed you. Be persuasive! Support your ideas with specific details, including details from the work itself.

### 4. Send!

Mail your letter, with the required entry coupon (*see page 2 of this flyer*) by the deadline date.

# For Teachers: How to Submit Your Class Set of Letters

(or individual letter if entering separately from a school or library)

**Letter Format & Return Address.** Each entry must be in **letter format and typewritten**. The child's name and complete return address (either home or school) must appear in the upper right corner of the first page of the letter, as per letter formatting. *Handwritten entries and entries not in letter format and without a return address will be disqualified.*

**Entry Coupon.** Each letter must be accompanied by an entry coupon (below). Staple the coupon to the last page of the letter facing out. Should your student win a prize, the Indiana Center for the Book will contact you using this information, so be sure your coupon is complete and legible! *Letters without a coupon will be eliminated.*

**Teacher Cover Letter.** Each class set should include a teacher cover letter that provides contact information **plus a list of the names of each student submitting a letter**. Cover letters *do not* take the place of entry coupons. *Each student's letter must have its own entry coupon stapled to the last page and facing out.*

**Mailing Envelope & Address.** Mail class sets in a flat 8x10" envelope or larger. Indicate the competition level — either 1, 2 or 3 — on the envelope. Include a complete return address on your mailing envelope. Mail to:

**Letters About Literature**  
**Competition Level** (Indicate level 1, 2 or 3 on envelope)  
**Indiana Center for the Book**  
140 N. Senate Ave  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

## Deadlines.

- **Level 3 entries must be postmarked by 12/15/14**
- **Levels 1 and 2 must be postmarked by 1/15/15**

**Assessment.** Entries will be judged on the following criteria:

- **Content** (addressing the contest theme)
- **Writer's Voice** (writing style and originality of expression)
- **Exposition** (language skills, organization and grammar)

Each criterion will be scored on a scale of zero (0) to five (5), where five (5) is excellent and zero (0) is not fulfilling the judging criteria.

**Recommended Length of Letters.** Entries for Level 1 should be no less than 100 words and no more than 500 words. • Entries for Level 2 should be no less than 300 words and no more than 1,000 words. • Entries for Level 3 should be no less than 600 words and no more than 1,500 words.

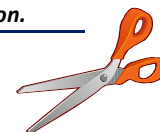
**Ownership.** All letters become the property of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. Please make copies of your students' entries, as no letters will be returned.

**Notification & Contact.** The Indiana Center for the Book will notify the winners for the Indiana awards on or about 4/1/15. The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress will notify National Winners on or about 5/15/15. For program updates, please refer to the contest website, [www.read.gov/letters](http://www.read.gov/letters).

<http://www.in.gov/library/lal.htm>

**Note for Teachers Submitting Class Sets:** Please do not assign the same book to an entire class, as this misses the spirit of the program — identifying a personal relationship with an author and/or book. Likewise, rather than assigning the same opening paragraph or topic sentences, encourage students to express themselves individually. *Your signature on the form below indicates that you have reviewed the submitted letter and acknowledge it to be the student's original work. Remember: Each student letter must have its own entry coupon.*

## LAL 2014-15 Entry Coupon – Please complete the form, cut, and staple to your letter!



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Male ☐ Female ☐ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Book/Story Title \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_

School/Library: \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

School/Library Phone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ School/Library Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher/Librarian Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_



**I am entering (check one)** ☐ through my school or community library ☐ individually, on my own

The additional information below **is required** if you are submitting a letter INDIVIDUALLY. Otherwise, this section is optional.

Child's Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Home Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's signature (**required**) \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_